

proposed a budget that ignores their priorities. They are not convinced because they don't see enough serious efforts to reduce their health care costs or to improve educational opportunities. They are not convinced because it appears that for too long no one in Government has been held accountable for incompetent leadership and neglect of the public interest.

Fortunately, the budget resolution we adopted last week responds to their voices. It demonstrates to families across the Nation that we are once again paying attention to their concerns. They have a reason to start once again to have confidence in their Government.

Let me give a few reasons, why I supported this resolution.

The failure of our Nation to guarantee access to affordable health care for children is shameful, and the President's budget threatened to worsen the situation for children in working families. This budget rejects the President's proposed cuts to the State Children's Health Insurance Program, extends care to 6 million additional eligible children, and makes children's health care a priority for Congress.

This budget also makes progress to ensure that preschool children from disadvantaged backgrounds will receive quality care and education; that children, no matter where they go to school, will have an equal opportunity for quality education; and will make college more affordable so that our children can compete in a global marketplace. By rejecting the President's proposed cuts in education and training, this budget shores up the Federal end of the bargain to support No Child Left Behind and support programs that educate individuals with disabilities.

This budget also includes \$100 million for grants to establish summer learning programs in local school districts through the Summer Term Education Program. I thank Chairman CONRAD for his assistance in getting my amendment to fund these programs included in the final resolution. These grants will help students in early elementary grades by supporting their participation in 6 weeks of summer school. Teachers tell us that students return to school each September at levels below their successes of the previous spring. Educators know this as "summer learning loss," and research has shown that students, on average, lose more than 1 month of reading skills and 2 months of math skills during the summer. The impact of summer learning loss is greatest for children living in poverty, children with learning disabilities, and children who do not speak English at home. The achievement gap in education begins early in life and remains a burden for too many throughout their time in school. The Summer Term Education Program funded by this resolution will help to bridge this gap through structured summer learning opportunities.

The security of our Nation at home and abroad is also a critical priority,

and honoring our veterans should be considered a sacred obligation. This budget fully funds our defense and homeland security funding needs and respects our duty to support our veterans. These brave men and women have sacrificed so much for us and for our Nation. Sadly, as uncovered by the Walter Reed scandal, our Government is failing them. This budget makes it possible to provide the quality health care and services that our veterans deserve. We cannot ignore the reality that there are financial and human costs to war. This budget recognizes that reality.

I am also pleased that the budget resolution includes an important bipartisan amendment that I offered with my colleagues, Senators BUNNING, BINGAMAN, LUGAR, and BOXER, to triple the administration's recommendation for carbon sequestration. This amendment provides an additional \$200 million for Department of Energy efforts on carbon sequestration, for a total of \$279 million in that account. Both environmental groups and the coal industry acknowledge the importance of better technology for carbon sequestration and control. The International Panel on Climate Change, environmental groups like NRDC, and the mining industry all are on record that the long-term deep geological storage of carbon is possible and is happening now on a small scale. But for it to occur on a far larger scale, we must redouble Federal efforts to make technologies widespread and economical in the next 15 years. A recent report by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology recommended a \$5 billion program over the next 10 years to achieve that goal. My amendment today provides a significant increase down that path.

Too many Americans say they lack confidence in our tax system because they hear about well-connected individuals and corporations getting away without paying their fair share. I believe this budget will begin to restore the confidence necessary for a fair and effective tax system. Instead of reaching deeper into the pockets of hard-working Americans, this budget will collect taxes where taxes are due. This budget calls for strong new measures to close the tax gap, shut down tax scams, and address offshore tax havens. I am proud of my efforts with Senator LEVIN and the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations to stop tax haven abuses, and I look forward to working with my colleagues in the 110th Congress to improve the fairness of our Tax Code.

The budget resolution we passed last week demonstrates that we can rise above ideology and gimmicks and begin tackling the serious challenges we face as a nation. It demonstrates that vision matters and leadership matters. I am grateful for Chairman CONRAD's extraordinary leadership and the terrific work of his talented, dedicated, and hard-working staff. They worked well in committee and on the

floor to help assemble a budget resolution that a majority of us in the Senate could vote for in good conscience and with confidence that America's fiscal policies have a chance, at long last, to get back on track.

COMMENDING MAJOR GENERAL GALE S. POLLOCK

Mr. INOUE. Mr. President, I would like to commend the Army leadership for selecting the first woman and nurse to serve as the Acting Army Surgeon General. Today, MG Gale S. Pollock, a nurse, is in charge of the Army Medical Department and leading the way in improving organizational efficiencies and streamlining the care of our wounded warriors.

Major General Pollock was born in Kearny, NJ, and entered the Army Nurse Corps in 1976 after earning her BSN from the Walter Reed Institute of Nursing through the University of Maryland. She also completed a master of business administration from Boston University, a master in health care administration from Baylor University, and a master in national security and strategy from the National Defense University. Major General Pollock also attended the U.S. Army Nurse Anesthesia Program and is a certified registered nurse anesthetist, CRNA, and a fellow in the American College of Healthcare Executives.

Major General Pollock's military education includes Senior Service College at the Industrial College of the Armed Forces, the U.S. Air Force War College, the Interagency Institute for Federal Health Care Executives, the Military Health System CAPSTONE program, the Principles of Advanced Nurse Administrators, and the NATO staff officer course.

On March 20, 2007, Major General Pollock, Chief of the Army Nurse Corps, was officially named Commander of the U.S. Army Medical Command and the Acting Army Surgeon General. Her previous military assignments include, Commander, Pacific Regional Medical Command and Tripler Army Medical Center, Honolulu, HI; Special Assistant to the Surgeon General for Information Management and Health Policy; Commander, Martin Army Community Hospital, Fort Benning, GA; Commander, U.S. Army Medical Department Activity, Fort Drum, NY; Staff Officer, Strategic Initiatives Command Group for the Army Surgeon General; Department of Defense, DoD, Healthcare Advisor to the Congressional Commission on Servicemembers and Veterans Transition Assistance; Health Fitness Advisor at the National Defense University; Senior Policy Analyst in Health Affairs, DoD; and Chief, Anesthesia Nursing Service at Walter Reed Army Medical Center, Washington, DC.

Major General Pollock brings extensive leadership, education, and experience to her new position as the Acting Army Surgeon General. As an Army nurse and woman, I applaud her many

accomplishments which have brought her to the highest level of rank and responsibility in military medicine.

HONORING JASON RAY

Mr. BURR. Mr. President, I rise today to honor the life of Jason Ray, a young man whose life was tragically cut short this past weekend while with the University of North Carolina basketball team during their trip to the NCAA Tournament games in New Jersey.

Jason, a 21-year-old native of Concord, NC, was set to graduate from UNC-Chapel Hill this May majoring in business administration with a minor in religion.

Jason was best known for regularly performing at sporting events as the university's mascot, "Rameses." He was a member of UNC's cheerleading squad.

I have seen Jason perform at the school's sporting events. I admired his unmatched school spirit and his animated, energetic interaction with the Tar Heel fans.

The University of North Carolina community lost a dear friend in Jason on Monday. However, he left a legacy that will certainly last for the many generations of fans that watched him perform. College basketball holds a special place in North Carolinians' hearts. Jason's team spirit and dedication helped make rooting for UNC basketball a community tradition.

I send my thoughts and prayers to his family, teammates, classmates, fans, and friends.

COLLEGE NATIONAL CHAMPIONS

Mr. BURR. Mr. President, I rise today to congratulate a college basketball team that this past weekend won a national title.

I am speaking of Barton College in Wilson, NC, which beat the defending champion Winona State to win the Division II Basketball Championship.

Through their win, Barton College also ended Winona State's Division II record 57-game winning streak.

Now I have seen a lot of college basketball games over the course of my life, especially representing the State of North Carolina, where basketball is not just a game but a way of life, but this one ranks close to the top when it comes to exciting endings.

With only 45 seconds left to play in the game, Barton down by 7 points—a deficit that would be extremely difficult to overcome by any team—and assisted by the stellar performance of his teammates, Barton's Anthony Atkinson scored an unbelievable 10 points in the remaining 39 seconds, included a buzzer-beating lay-up, to win the Division II national title by a score of 77 to 75.

If you didn't see the game live, I would suggest you go on the Internet and watch the ending to this fantastic game.

It is simply unbelievable and is reminiscent of Christian Laettner's game-winning last-second jump shot in Duke's dramatic 104 to 103 victory over Kentucky in the East regional final of the 1992 NCAA Tournament.

For Barton College, a small private school with a student body of only 960 students, this win over Winona State, a relatively large school with an enrollment of over 8,000 students, represents a "David and Goliath" story for a smalltown North Carolina basketball team.

Again, I congratulate the NCAA Division II National Champion Barton Bulldogs and head coach Ron Lievense on an extremely exciting end to an extraordinary season.

BIOFUELS FOR ENERGY SECURITY AND TRANSPORTATION ACT

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, over 18 months ago, the President signed into law the Energy Policy Act of 2005. The enactment of that legislation was a watershed event in structuring sound energy policy for this Nation's future. One of the linchpins of that act is its commitment to the development of ethanol and other alternative fuels that will move us toward greater energy security by displacing foreign sources of energy for our transportation fuels.

Since EPACT was enacted, we have seen a surge of interest in the development of infrastructure for production and distribution of ethanol and other biofuels. I am proud that the Energy Policy Act of 2005 is greatly responsible for that. EPACT is creating American energy and American jobs in America's heartland.

Just as I am proud of the new world of alternative fuels created in EPACT, I am also very proud of the bill Senator BINGAMAN and I have introduced to build on the renewable fuels provisions of that Act—the Biofuels for Energy Security and Transportation Act, the BEST Act—of 2007.

The Energy Policy Act established the first renewable fuels standard, which required the production of 7.5 billion gallons of ethanol annually by the year 2012. Private industry responded, and today we are on course to exceeding significantly the levels set in the Energy. Since August 2005, construction has begun on more than 70 new ethanol biorefineries, creating more than 160,000 new jobs, and last year, this country produced nearly 5 billion gallons of ethanol.

Building on that success, the BEST Act that Senator BINGAMAN and I have introduced increases the renewable fuels standard, RFS—beginning at a level of 8.5 billion gallons next year and increasing to 36 billion gallons in 2022. We get this ambitious RFS with the understanding that promotion and enhancement of advanced biofuels, such as cellulosic ethanol, will be essential to making this new goal a reality.

In his recent State of the Union speech, the President laid out an ambitious but worthy goal to reduce our consumption of gasoline by 20 percent in 10 years. The President envisioned biofuels as a key component to meeting this goal. In addition to implementing the 2005 Energy Bill, the BEST Act is another step, and a very significant one, in achieving that mark. By increasing our production and consumption of biofuels in the United States, we can decrease our reliance on foreign oil, while at the same time creating American jobs in a growing biofuels industry.

To complement the increase in the renewable fuels standard, our bill includes several measures to help promote the establishment of a biofuels infrastructure, including grants to States and localities to build biofuels corridors.

Another enhancement to speed production and distribution of these fuels is Federal loan guarantees specifically for these projects. I am pleased that we appear to be getting on the right path to implementing a significant loan guarantee program as envisioned in the title 17 of EPACT. This provision is absolutely essential to starting up some of the domestic clean energy investments we so urgently need to ensure our energy security. The BEST Act further refines those provisions to reflect the realities of commercial project finance.

Finally, the bill increases our investment in bioenergy research and development by 50 percent. This research is essential to developing methods to produce advanced biofuels, such as cellulosic ethanol, that we will need to meet our long-term goals.

Several weeks ago, Senator BINGAMAN and I sponsored a biofuels conference in the Energy and Natural Resources Committee to explore all of the issues related to this important piece of our energy policy. We heard from numerous government and private sector scientists, industry project developers, and the financial community. We explored every facet of the issues related to increased biofuels production and development. The BEST Act we have introduced is the culmination of our deliberations. I am very pleased with this effort and hopeful that it will be every bit as successful as the effort we spawned in the 2005 Energy bill.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

RETIREMENT OF JOE DART

• Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, I honor a great and dedicated American, Joseph A. Dart, who for almost 30 years has championed the rights of workers across Massachusetts. As he prepares for a well-deserved retirement, I am grateful to be able to pay tribute to this wonderful man and give him the recognition he deserves for touching the lives of so many.